

songs. No one has yet thoroughly mined the treasures of our church hymnal. Many supplementary hymns, having rare worth, appear in some of the books that flood the market. The poets of the Christian church, as well as of the Jewish, have been in a very real sense inspired in some of their utterances. They do not give us new truths, but God has guided them to certain choice forms of expression which make the truth luminous and powerful. We may do well to transfer these words of peculiar light and strength to our own minds. Frederick William Faber and Frances Ridley Havergal are helpful, for they have the genuine poetic gift, and they write out a fulness of spiritual life reached by few.

There should be much prayer. Altho some people pray much, all might pray a little more with benefit. Many Christians are delinquent in this. Their leanness is largely due to scanty praying. The remedy is close at hand whenever they are willing to apply it. The current excuse of having "no time" will not stand examination. It is not a question of hours, but of moments, so many of which are employed during the day in things not really needful. Some of these, by a little management, can be combined to constitute an additional season of formal devotion; and others can be splendidly utilized in delightful ejaculatory prayer. With the will comes the way. Whoever is thoroughly bent upon progress will reach it.

The use of pen or pencil is valuable. Unless thought be mixed with emotion, the latter would be evanescent and useless. The Bible is best read with pencil in hand, either to mark the margin or to make memoranda of striking passages or reflections suggested by the text. The same habit may be followed with other devotional books. It is one only way by which meditation can be practically secured, and the material preserved for that frequent review by which truth is permanently transferred to the mind. He who accustoms himself to the use of the pen doubles the value of private devotions. It is a priceless habit for a young Christian.

A devout habit of speech should be cultivated. We should honor God more with our lips. Many current expressions in which Christians thoughtlessly indulge are really atheistic. Certain popular phrases, such as the secular press brings into vogue, should not be lightly accepted by the godly, or allowed always to pass unchallenged when used by our companions. Words not technically profane may have an effect fully as demoralizing by shutting out all thoughts of the Creator. Multitudes studiously avoid referring the changes in the weather to their real author, and lightly ascribe them to "the clerk of the weather," some heathen deity or some mythical and impossible personage. "Luck," "chance," accident, fate, fortune, figure largely with the people of the world as causes of things, good or bad, that come to them. When a follower of Christ thus speaks he distinctly lowers his banner and loses opportunity to testify that his Father rules in all the affairs of men. This witness should be scrupulously

preserved for its effect on public opinion, and for its reactionary influence on our own thoughts and feelings.

Let more be made of Christian fellowship. We become like those with whom we mingle. This is inevitable. If we seek familiar companionship with people organized around ideas that are mere moral or humanitarian our spiritual tone may suffer. If we are often found in circles where Christ cannot be named with propriety, our love and loyalty to Him will be likely to deteriorate. Our comradeship must be dominated by the Master. Our nearest friends should be selected by this test. We must meet often with those who will stimulate us to higher things and help us to the best standards of living. Select circles formed for this purpose have in all eyes been found useful. Properly guided and guarded they can do much for their members. Special surroundings must direct us to the particular form this means of grace should take, but in some form, the very best available, it should be thoroughly worked, for it will greatly redound to large, personal progress and exceeding glory to God.

The Christian Life

A Larger Prayer

At first I prayed for Light:
Could I but see the way,
How gladly, swiftly would I walk
To everlasting day!

And next I prayed for Strength,
That I might tread the road
With firm, unfaltering feet, and win
The heaven's serene abode.

And then I asked for Faith:
Could I but trust my God,
I'd live enfolded in His peace,
Tho foes were all abroad.

But now I ask for Love;
Deep love to God and man;
A living love that will not fail,
However dark His plan.

And Light and Strength and Faith
Are opening everywhere!
God only waited for me till
I prayed the larger prayer.

—Edna Dean Cheney.

PRAYER MEETING TOPIC

THE PARABLES—"THE PHARISEE AND PUBLICAN."

I. The Parable. Luke 18: 9-14.

a. To whom spoken and why? v. 9.

b. On "Pharisee" and "Publican," see Helps in your Bible on the subject, "Jewish Sects and Parties."

c. The Pharisee's prayer: 1. No confession of sin. Rom. 10: 9, 10; I John 1: 9. 2. Prayed to himself instead of to God. v. 11. 3. Thanked his god (himself) for his own righteousness, rather than God's righteousness. Col. 3: 17; Isa. 64: 6. 4. Depended for favor on what he had done rather than on God's mercy. Rom. 11: 32. 5. Compared himself with a poor sinner rather than with God. Matt. 5: 4-8; I Pet. 2: 21; John 13: 15. 6. Boastfulness of what was simple duty. Luke 17: 10.

d. The Publican's prayer: 1. Acknowledged his unworthiness before man,—“stood afar off.” 2. Acknowledged his unworthiness in God's sight,—“would not lift up his eyes to heaven.” 3. Confessed his sin. v. 13. 4. Repented of his sin,—“smote on his breast.”

e. Jesus' judgment of the two. v. 14.

II Lessons for us

1. Pray in humility. I Pet. 5: 16.

2. Confess sin. Prov. 28: 13; Ps. 32: 1-6; Jas. 5: 16.

3. Repent of sin and forsake it. Acts 17: 30; Isa. 55: 7.

4. Depend on God's free grace in Christ, rather than on our own works. Matt. 7: 7-11; Rom. 8: 32.

J. L. GILLIN.

THE GREATEST NEEDS OF THE CHURCH

MISS ALPHA MALCOLM

Our money, our powers, our service, our life, given for Christ is our only way to help his church. To live a life of service, consecrate means, time, talent, our life and our very selves to the Master and his cause.

This is our reasonable service. The true and grand idea of a church is—a society for making men like Christ, earth like heaven, the kingdom of the world, the kingdom of Christ.

We find Christ at the head of this society. Christ's mission on earth was service—he became servant to all.

The Savior's one great object was soul-winning. He finished his work and then returned to the Father.

We are servants, all we have and all we are belong to the Master. Our time, talent and even our money. God only loaned these to us. Christ and the church have a just claim upon all we have and are. What we do for Christ we do for the church.

The politician gives his service, his money, his time for the cause he favors. His sole aim is to win over to his ranks all that he possibly can. Shall we be less zealous for a more worthy cause?

Christ loved his church so that he gave not only his time and service, but his life. If we now love him we will give him our all, even our life if need be.

If we have not talent or money to give we can give simple service and the strength of our influence in our daily life. There is none so poor that he cannot aid the cause by his sympathies and prayers, which is one of the greatest additions to the needs of the church. Let us do for Christ and the church every good thing that we can do and do it now. Let us not defer it nor neglect it for, "We shall not pass this way again."

God's church is his vineyard. He himself has planted it and every believer has his share of the responsibility, God must have fruit of his vineyard or he will destroy the unfruitful vines. "I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me, ye can do nothing." This par-